Intimate Partner Violence Stigma: The Intersection of Race and Socioeconomic Status

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Men displayed more stigma than women on all stigma measures. Men also said they would be less likely to intervene if Sandra were their neighbor.

Participants who identified as something other than heterosexual (i.e., asexual, bisexual, gay or lesbian, pansexual) would be less likely to intervene if Sandra were their neighbor.

Participants who identified as “very liberal” displayed less stigma than other political orientations on all measures.

Greater devaluation and discrimination was shown for Sandra when she was low SES (M = 2.39) compared to when she was high SES (M = 1.93), F(1, 328) = 25.43, p < .001, n² = .07.

Participants desired greater social distance from Sandra when she was low SES (M = 3.55) compared to when she was high SES (M = 2.75), F(1, 327) = 27.75, p < .001, n² = .07.

Participants indicated Sandra would have the right to use physical force more often when she was high SES (M = 6.63) compared to when she was low SES (M = 6.37), F(1, 332) = 5.79, p = .017, n² = .02.

Discussion

Consistent with our hypotheses, there was more stigma directed toward the low SES victim than high SES; however, there were no main effects of race nor any interaction effects. These findings indicate being low SES may affect a person’s view of IPV victims more than race.

Similar to previous findings, women seem to have less stigmatizing attitudes toward victims of IPV than men. Participants who identified as something other than heterosexual and participants who identified as “very liberal” also had less stigmatizing attitudes than their counterparts. Interestingly, participants also were more likely to say Sandra had a right to use physical force to defend herself when she was high SES than when she was low SES.

We hope these results can be used to educate first responders, law enforcement, mental health and medical professionals, and advocates on potential biases. Being cognizant of stigma is a good way to ensure that all victims are treated with equal respect.

References


